"marketing Discipline Guidelines, 2001" which provides for penal action against LPG distributors indulging in black marketing of LPG.

Whenever OMCs receive complaints, these are investigated and if the complaint is established, suitable action is taken against the LPG distributors(s) in accordance with the provisions of the MDG. MDG provides for following action against the distributor:—

— Fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 1st offence.

— Fine of Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 2nd offence.

— Termination of the distributorship for 3rd offence.

In addition to the action taken by the OMCs, State Government are empowered under the LPG (Regulation of Supply & Distribution) Order, 2000 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to take action against black marketing of domestic LPG. Similarly, the Weights and Measures Departments of the States/UTs initiate legal action against those LPG distributors found supplying under-weight LPG cylinders. The State Governments have been alerted from time to time to take steps against the black-marketing/diversion of domestic cylinders for unauthorized usage.

Government have issued advertisements cautioning the public that use of domestic LPG for non-domestic purposes is illegal, dangerous and against national interest. Through these advertisements, cooperation of the general public has also been sought to report any irregularity/malpractice to the OMCs.

The officials of OMCs carry out random checks at distributors godowns, delivery points, as well as en-route to ensure that no pilferage takes place. The distributors of OMCs are under strict instructions to check the weight of cylinders at their godowns before delivery, and only cylinders with the specified weight are to be delivered to the customers. The distributors have also been instructed to ensure that the seals are verified & shown to the customers at the time of delivery. In case any under-weight cylinder is received by the customers, such cylinders are replaced with a fresh refill cylinder without any charges levied by the OMCs.

Proposal for hike in fuel price

64. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether following spurt in crude price in the global market, there is a proposal to hike oil and gas price in the domestic market; and

(b) if so, the details with measures taken, if any, to ensure that the price-rise does not induce further inflation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) The global prices of crude oil and petroleum products have remained high and volatile since 2004. As passing on the entire impact of the steep increase in the oil prices to the consumers will result in hardship to the common man, the retail selling prices of petrol, diesel, PDS Kerosene and domestic LPG have not been increased in tandem with the international oil prices. In view of this, the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are incurring under-recoveries on domestic sale of sensitive petroleum products namely petrol, diesel, PDS kerosene and domestic LPG.

The Government has adopted the principle of equitable burden sharing between the Government, the oil PSUs and consumers to protect the interests of common man, vulnerable sections of society and also the financial health of OMCs. In this context, the Government has made marginal increase in petrol and diesel prices by Rs. 2/litre and Re. 1/litre respectively with effect from 15.2.2008 which is actually in the nature of a restoration of retail prices, to the price level operating before February, 2007. Despite the steep increases in international oil prices, the Government has not increased the prices of PDS Kerosene during the last six years and of Domestic LPG during the last three years.

The Government is closely monitoring the international oil prices and will continue to protect the interests of consumers.

Profit and turnover of public and private oil companies

†65. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that public and private sector oil companies in the country have earned net profit in the first nine months of the financial year 2007-08 ending December;

(b) if so, the break up of the amount of returns earned by each of the such companies during the said period; and

(c) the total turnover of each of these companies during this period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) Private Oil Companies are not under the administrative control of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. The Profit After Tax and total turnover of the major Oil Public Sector Undertakings in the first nine months of the financial year 2007-08 are as under:

(Rs. in crore)

Name of the major Oil PSUs	Profit After Tax	Total Turnover
ONGC	14074.55	44408.92
IOCL	7377.00	177223.00
BPCL	1522.18	86211.02
HPCL	750.38	73901.00
GAIL	1879.00	13073.00
OIL	1342.06	4291.77

Shortage of LPG supply

†66. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an acute shortage of supply of LPG cylinders in the country;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.